

Message Text

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ACTION NEA-10

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R 131635Z FEB 76

FM AMEMBASSY ALGIERS

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 3851

INFO AMEMBASSY CAIRO

AMEMBASSY NOUAKCHOTT

AMEMBASSY RABAT

AMEMBASSY TRIPOLI

AMEMBASSY TUNIS

USMISSION USUN NEW YORK

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E.O. 11652 N/A

TAGSC PFOR AG LY SS

SUBJECT: BOUMEDIENE VISITS TRIPOLI

1. ALGERIAN MEDIA ANNOUNCED FEB 12 THAT PRESIDENT BOUMEDIENE HAD GONE TO TRIPOLI FOR "POLITICAL MEETINGS" WITH COLONEL QADHAFI. FEB 13 RADIO BROADCAST IN ALGIERS REPORTED THAT TWO LEADERS HAD MET NON-STOP FOR 10 HOURS UNTIL 3 A.M. FEB 13 AND HAD DISCUSSED SAHARA AND SITUATION IN REGION.

2. BOUMEDIENE ACCOMPANIED BY: FOREIGN MINISTER BOUTEFLIKA, MINISTER OF INDUSTRY AND ENERGY ABDESSELAM, MINISTER OF STATE FOR TRANSPORT BITAT, PRESIDENCY DEPUTY SECRETARY GENERAL HAMDANI, PRESIDENCY PROTOCOL DIRECTOR COL. ALAHOUM, AND PRESIDENTIAL PRESS COUNSELOR AMIMOUR.

3. QADHAFI'S DELEGATION INCLUDED: GENERAL STAFF CHIEF AND RCC MEMBER COL. YOUNES, MINISTER OF INTERIOR AND RCC
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MEMBER EL HAMIDI, MINISTER OF STATE OFR RCC BEN AMER,

AND PETROLEUM MINISTER EL MABROUK.

4. IN AIRPORT PRESS CONFERENCE ON ARRIVAL, BOUMEDIENE CALLED LIBYA NATURAL ALLY AND SAID TRIPOLI MEETING WOULD CONTINUE AND DEEPEN DISCUSSIONS BEGUN AT SIRTE AND HASSI MESSAOUD TO FIND "SURE AND EFFICIENT MEANS FOR REALIZATION OF HOPE WHICH NOURISHES ARAB NATION, THAT IS, UNITY." ANSWERING QUESTION ABOUT NORTH-SOUTH DIALOGUE, BOUMEDIENE SAID DIALOGUE WAS NOT "QUESTION OF ALMS" BUT PURSUIT OF STRUGGLE AGAINST COLONIALISM WHICH HAS DOMINATED WORLD FOR CENTURIES. ON SAHARA, BOUMEDIENE REITERATED THAT: A. MEDIATION EFFORTS HAD FAILED; B. "WE LIVE TODAY IN A ZONE OF CONFLICT, A SITUATION WHICH REQUIRES TRULY MILITANT POSITION;" C. "WESTERN CAPITALISM AND ITS EXECUTORS COULD NOT DENY EXISTENCE OF A PEOPLE WHO REFUSE TO BECOME MAURITANIAN, MOROCCAN OR EVEN ALGERIAN;" AND D. THIS PEOPLE COMBATTING INVASION FORCE WHICH EXCEEDS 30,000.

5. COMMENT: LIBYAN OPTION SEEMS TO BE ONE OF FEW LEFT ALGERIANS AT THIS POINT AND THEY ARE EXPLOITING IT AS MUCH AS POSSIBLE. PERHAPS PROFITING FROM MISTAKES OF OTHER ARABS WHO DISCUSSED UNITY WITH QADHAFI AND PERHAPS HAVING OWN RESERVATIONS AS WELL, EGIME HERE SEEMS TO BE STEERING AWAY FROM SWEEPING PRONOUNCEMENTS IN FAVOR OF MORE GRADUAL EVOLUTION TOWARD ILLUSIVE GOAL OF UNITY. IN THIS CONNECTION, SUBSTITUTION OF ABDESSELAM FOR COUNCIL OF REVOLUTION FIGURES SUCH AS COL. DRAIA SUGGESTS ALGERIANS WISH TO FOCUS TRIPOLI DISCUSSIONS ON TECHNICAL MATTERS.

6. DESPITE BOUMEDIENE'S TOUGH TALK ON NORTH-SOUTH DIALOGUE AND TBDESSEUM'S AND EL MABROUK'S PRESENCE AT TALKS, WE DO NOT NECESSARILY BELIEVE THAT ALGERIANS CONTEMPLATING "BAD BOY" NORTH-SOUTH APPROACH WITH LIBYANS, WHO WOULD PRESUMABLY BE AMENABLE TO SUCH A POLICY. ALGERIANS HAVE BREATHED MUCH FIRE IN THEIR NORTH-SOUTH PRONOUNCEMENTS IN PAST, BUT THEIR POLICIES HAVE GENERALLY BEEN DICTATED BY PRACTICAL CONSIDERATIONS. PARKER

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